

To: **EXECUTIVE**
16 JULY 2024

BRACKNELL FOREST PRODUCTIVITY PLAN
Executive Director: Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Government introduced a requirement for all local authorities to prepare, publish and submit a Productivity Plan as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25. This report seeks the Executive's approval to submit to the Department for Housing, Local Government and Communities the plan for Bracknell Forest attached as Annex A to this report.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Executive endorses the Productivity Plan for Bracknell Forest Council at Annex A and authorises the Executive Director: Resources to submit it to the Department for Housing, Local Government and Communities by 19 July.**

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 As part of the 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement the Government introduced a requirement for all local authorities to prepare and submit a Productivity Plan to the Department for Local Government, Housing and Communities by 19 July 2024. The requirements of such plans were confirmed in a letter to Chief Executives sent on 16 April 2024 by the Minister for Local Government.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The requirement to prepare and submit a Productivity Plan to the Department of Local Government Housing and Communities (DLUHC) applies to all local authorities. The alternative of not complying with the Government's requirement is not proposed.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25 triggered a significant number of responses from local authorities requesting additional funding in response to the scale of financial challenges being faced by the sector. This was supported by a large number of Members of Parliament, across all political parties.
- 5.2 In response, the Government announced that it would provide an additional £500m in the final settlement, primarily to support costs of social care. Alongside this, the Government stated that it would require local authorities to produce Productivity Plans.
- 5.3 The Minister for Local Government wrote to council Chief Executives on 16 April, confirming this requirement and setting out more detail regarding his expectations. The Minister's letter stated,

“I am not looking to impose excessive burdens. I am not issuing you with a formal template or a detailed list of criteria to meet. I expect your plans to be three to four pages in length and to set out what you have done in recent years, alongside your current plans, to transform your organisation and services. I do not want to specify a list of metrics you must report, but I do want to understand how you will monitor and assess your plans to assure yourselves and your residents that they will be delivered.”

- 5.4 The Minister’s letter went on to set out four suggested key lines of enquiry and 25 detailed questions for consideration within these. The Council’s proposed response at Annex A is framed around the key lines of enquiry.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

6.1

Financial Advice

- 6.2 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 There are no new proposals in this report that require consultation.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 There are no implications arising from this report and therefore no equalities impact in relation to this decision.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 There are no new implications arising from this report.

Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.6 There are no new impacts arising from this report.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 None related to this report.

Background Papers

Annex A – Bracknell Forest Council Productivity Plan

Contact for further information

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